

Superfund Cooperative Agreement (V96048302)

Progress Report

April 2013 – June 2013

Site Name: Upper Columbia River - Cooperative Agreement Funding Award, Teck Cominco/EPA Contract Settlement

Ecology Contact: John Roland, Project Coordinator, Toxics Cleanup Program
(Alternate Contact: Chuck Gruenenfelder, Toxics Cleanup Program)

EPA Contact: Dr. Laura Buelow - Region 10 RPM

Background

On June 2, 2006, the EPA and Teck Cominco (TCM) entered into a formal contract, ("Settlement Agreement"), directing TCM to complete a Superfund RI/FS of the Upper Columbia River site (UCR). Integral to the Settlement Agreement is a Statement of Work, referred to as "Exhibit A" in the contract. Section XIII Costs, subpart 48 of the Settlement Agreement establishes funding by TCM to the State of Washington and others for oversight participation in the RI/FS process. The current Cooperative Agreement "grant" (V-96048302), runs from 3/1/11 through 6/30/15. The agreement serves as the EPA/Ecology administrative construct for distributing Teck funding to the state.

1a. Accomplishments

Project Management and Implementation

Routine communications were maintained with the EPA project team and RPM. Weekly project manager meetings. Coordination with other state agencies continues, including Department of Health and Department of Fish and Wildlife and Department of Health.

Technical and Regulatory Remedial Action Participation

Continued support of EPA planning for the Young American mill local pollution discharge evaluation and the study of the Bossburg town site and shoreline. Participated in technical meetings in Kettle Falls. Provided further updates on the results of the Ecology soil sampling program, continued to raise concerns over the potential for human health implications and that the soil LOE does not look adequate.

Community Relations

Ecology continues routine ongoing association with the Lake Roosevelt Forum (LRF) – activity on this front was low during the period. Staff also maintains coordination with local government and outreach to interested citizens as needed. Communication with the Citizens for a Clean Columbia (CCC) continued during the period.

1b. Problems and Corrective Actions

Resolution of concerns surrounding Teck dispute response to the sediment QAPP delay Phase 2 sampling.

2.a. Is the project on schedule?

The schedule is not managed by Ecology.

b. What percentage of the project is complete?

Estimated progress on the RI/FS is roughly at 25.

3.a. Are the project expenditures to date as budgeted?

Expenditure predictions thus far appear to be generally as anticipated.

b. Discuss Discrepancies

N/A.

4a. How much time is needed to complete the project?

This is an EPA lead project. RI/FS Work Plan schedule updates currently projects project completion in 2018, or later. The postponement of sediment sampling extended this further.

b. What amount of funding is needed to complete the project?

Ecology continues to anticipate that all annual funds in this current 4 year cooperative agreement, or in excess, will be fully utilized if the RI begins to progress as planned and sediment issues are resolved and work advances.

5. Other – N/A

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Superfund Cooperative Agreement (V96048302)

Progress Report

January 2013 – March 2013

Site Name: Upper Columbia River - Cooperative Agreement Funding Award, Teck Cominco/EPA Contract Settlement

Ecology Contact: John Roland, Project Coordinator, Toxics Cleanup Program
(Alternate Contact: Chuck Gruenenfelder, Toxics Cleanup Program)

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Background

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1a. Accomplishments

Project Management and Implementation

All Participating Parties met in Richland to discuss administrative and MOA reviews. Routine communications were maintained with the EPA project team and RPM. Weekly project manager meetings. Coordination with other state agencies continues, including Department of Health and Department of Fish and Wildlife and Department of Health.

Technical and Regulatory Remedial Action Participation

Participating Party technical meetings were conducted in February and March, in Seattle and Spokane. Discussion of mine issues, including Young American Mine and Mill were initiated by EPA. Ecology initiated dialogue on pending results of soil sampling performed by the state near the border. Ecology shared with EPA that depending on the results, the soil LOE may not be adequate.

Community Relations

Ecology continues routine ongoing association with the Lake Roosevelt Forum (LRF) – activity on this front was low during the period. Staff also maintains coordination with local government and outreach to interested citizens as needed. Communication with the Citizens for a Clean Columbia (CCC) continued during the period.

1b. Problems and Corrective Actions

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5. Other – N/A

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Superfund Cooperative Agreement (V96048302)

Progress Report

October 2012 – December 2012

Site Name: Upper Columbia River - Cooperative Agreement Funding Award, Teck Cominco/EPA Contract Settlement

Ecology Contact: John Roland, Project Coordinator, Toxics Cleanup Program
(Alternate Contact: Chuck Gruenenfelder, Toxics Cleanup Program)

EPA Contact: Dr. Laura Buelow - Region 10 RPM

Background

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1a. Accomplishments

Project Management and Implementation

Routine communications were maintained with the EPA project team and RPM. Weekly project manager meetings. Coordination with other state agencies continues, including Department of Health and Department of Fish and Wildlife and Department of Health.

Technical and Regulatory Remedial Action Participation

Teck announced dispute of EPA Sediment study QAPP comments letter results in postponement of sampling till fall of 2013.

Support continued on the completion of the upland Soil LOE, which EPA delivered during the period.

Community Relations

Ecology continues routine ongoing association with the Lake Roosevelt Forum (LRF) – activity on this front was low during the period. Staff also maintains coordination with local government and outreach to interested citizens as needed. Communication with the Citizens for a Clean Columbia (CCC) continued during the period.

1b. Problems and Corrective Actions

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2.a. Is the project on schedule?

The schedule is not managed by Ecology.

b. What percentage of the project is complete?

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b. Discuss Discrepancies

N/A.

4a. How much time is needed to complete the project?

This is an EPA lead project. RI/FS Work Plan schedule updates currently projects project completion in 2018, or later. The postponement of sediment sampling will extend this further.

b. What amount of funding is needed to complete the project?

Ecology continues to anticipate that all annual funds in this current 4 year cooperative agreement, or in excess, will be fully utilized if the RI begins to progress as planned.

5. Other – N/A

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Superfund Cooperative Agreement (V96048302)

Progress Report

July 2012 – September 2012

Site Name: Upper Columbia River - Cooperative Agreement Funding Award, Teck Cominco/EPA Contract Settlement

Ecology Contact: John Roland, Project Coordinator, Toxics Cleanup Program
(Alternate Contact: Chuck Gruenenfelder, Toxics Cleanup Program)

EPA Contact: Dr. Laura Buelow - Region 10 RPM

Background

On June 2, 2006, the EPA and Teck Cominco (TCM) entered into a formal contract, ("Settlement Agreement"), directing TCM to complete a Superfund RI/FS of the Upper Columbia River site (UCR). Integral to the Settlement Agreement is a Statement of Work, referred to as "Exhibit A" in the contract. Section XIII Costs, subpart 48 of the Settlement Agreement establishes funding by TCM to the State of Washington and others for oversight participation in the RI/FS process. The current Cooperative Agreement "grant" (V-96048302), runs from 3/1/11 through 6/30/15. The agreement serves as the EPA/Ecology administrative construct for distributing Teck funding to the state.

1a. Accomplishments

Project Management and Implementation

Routine communications were maintained with the EPA project team and RPM. Weekly project manager meetings. Coordination with other state agencies continues, including Department of Health and Department of Fish and Wildlife and Department of Health.

Technical and Regulatory Remedial Action Participation

Initial evaluation of revised Phase 2 sediment study QAPP from Teck exhibits several flaws. Concerns are communicated on appropriateness and feasibility of the proposed fall 2012 field work as hoped. Teck announces dispute of EPA QAPP comment letter creating another delay in project advancement. Split sampling needs are a major aspect of the dispute.

Discussions on the completion of a Soil LOE progress.

WA DOH completed its re-evaluation of public health risks caused by fish consumption with Ecology participation. An announcement of revised advise occurred in July.

Community Relations

Continued assisting DOH in fish advisory and fact sheet planning.

Ecology continues routine ongoing association with the Lake Roosevelt Forum (LRF) – activity on this front was low during the period. Staff also maintains coordination with local government and outreach to interested citizens as needed. Communication with the Citizens for a Clean Columbia (CCC) continued during the period.

1b. Problems and Corrective Actions

Resolution of concerns surrounding Teck dispute response to the sediment QAPP delay Phase 2 sampling.

2.a. Is the project on schedule?

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b. Discuss Discrepancies

N/A.

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This is an EPA lead project. RI/FS Work Plan schedule updates currently projects project completion in 2018, or later.

b. What amount of funding is needed to complete the project?

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5. Other – N/A

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EPA Contact: Helen Bottcher, Region 10 RPM

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1a. Accomplishments

Project Management and Implementation

Routine communications were maintained with the EPA project team and RPM. Weekly project manager meetings continue. Coordination with other state agencies continues, including Department of Health and Department of Fish and Wildlife and Department of Health.

Technical and Regulatory Remedial Action Participation

Sediment QAPP consolidated comments discussions continued. Outstanding specific issues surrounding the sediment QAPP were essentially resolved during the period, or final determinations made by EPA. This set the stage for consensus that the parties all support rapid review of a Teck revised draft document and final resolution of problems with the hope of getting in the field in the fall of 2012.

Discussions on the completion of a Soil LOE progressed.

WA DOH continued advancing a re-evaluation of public health risks caused by fish consumption with Ecology participation.

Community Relations

Continued assisting DOH in fish advisory and fact sheet planning—release scheduled for July.

Ecology continues routine ongoing association with the Lake Roosevelt Forum (LRF) – activity on this front was low during the period. Staff also maintains coordination with local government and outreach to interested citizens as needed. Communication with the Citizens for a Clean Columbia (CCC) continued during the period.

1b. Problems and Corrective Actions

Resolution of concerns surrounding the sediment QAPP comments look to be resolved, paving the way for issuance of final comments and a revised draft.

2.a. Is the project on schedule?

The schedule is not managed by Ecology

b. What percentage of the project is complete?

Estimated progress on the RI/FS is roughly at 25.

3.a. Are the project expenditures to date as budgeted?

Expenditure predictions thus far appear to be generally as anticipated.

b. Discuss Discrepancies

N/A.

4a. How much time is needed to complete the project?

This is an EPA lead project. RI/FS Work Plan schedule updates currently projects project completion in 2018, or later.

b. What amount of funding is needed to complete the project?

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5. Other – N/A

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EPA Contact: Helen Bottcher, Region 10 RPM

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1a. Accomplishments

Project Management and Implementation

Routine communications were maintained with the EPA project team and RPM. Weekly project manager meetings continue. Coordination with other state agencies continues, including Department of Health and Department of Fish and Wildlife and Department of Health.

Technical and Regulatory Remedial Action Participation

Ecology continued leadership and contribution to working groups assembled in an effort to resolve major outstanding technical sediment QAPP issues and associated LOE topics. This includes: porewater, slag characterization, mussels, sieving, and sample stations selection.

Sediment QAPP consolidated comments discussions continued.

Discussions on the development of a Soil LOE were underway. Ecology prompted discussions on the proposed Incremental Composite Sampling (ICS) approach promoted by EPA. Specific enquiries were made and discussed amongst the parties.

WA DOH continued advancing a re-evaluation of public health risks caused by fish consumption. Participated and provided comments to DOH on various aspects.

Participated in discussions on the Bossburg town site beach site, which is a localized area along the upper River that is under review and discussions to establish appropriate path forward.

Community Relations

Provided further comment on EPA draft beaches fact sheet planning.

Continued assisting DOH in fish advisory and fact sheet planning.

Ecology continues routine ongoing association with the Lake Roosevelt Forum (LRF) – activity on this front was low during the period. Staff also maintains coordination with local government and outreach to interested citizens as needed. Communication with the Citizens for a Clean Columbia (CCC) continued during the period.

1b. Problems and Corrective Actions

Ecology is continuing dialogue with EPA staff on how best to ensure the soil LOE is adequate and that ICS approach ultimately achieve an adequate geographic scale of resolution to gain appropriate coverage to avoid missing large areas.

2.a. Is the project on schedule?

The schedule is not managed by Ecology. The recent Problem Formulation deficiencies and past Teck planning document deficiencies have chronically delayed the process. Draft sediment QAPP comment discussions have also jeopardized the sediment sampling schedule.

b. What percentage of the project is complete?

Estimated progress on the RI/FS is roughly at 25.

3.a. Are the project expenditures to date as budgeted?

Expenditure predictions thus far appear to be generally as anticipated.

b. Discuss Discrepancies

N/A.

4a. How much time is needed to complete the project?

This is an EPA lead project. RI/FS Work Plan schedule updates currently projects project completion in 2018, or later.

b. What amount of funding is needed to complete the project?

Ecology continues to anticipate that all annual funds in this current 4 year cooperative agreement, or in excess, will be fully utilized if the RI begins to progress as planned.

5. Other – N/A

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Progress Report

October 2011 – December 2011

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1a. Accomplishments

Project Management and Implementation

CCT formal dispute concerning the Problem Formulation amendment was effectively resolved by the end of the year. Teck will be instructed to make changes as agreed by all government parties.

Recommitment to MOA process affirmed by the participating parties' management. Agreement on the path forward for the sediment LOE was generally reached. Future LOE intentions were clarified.

Routine communications were maintained with the EPA project team and RPM. Weekly project manager meetings continue. Coordination with other state agencies continues, including Department of Health and Department of Fish and Wildlife and Department of Health.

Technical and Regulatory Remedial Action Participation

Continued re-evaluation and discussions of the 2005 Toxicity data.

Extensive levels of effort were dedicated toward advancing common ground and comments to Teck that will establish expectations for revising the sediment QAPP. Ecology encouraged and significantly contributed to working groups assembled in an effort to resolve major outstanding technical QAPP issues and associated LOE topics. This includes: porewater, slag characterization, mussels, sieving, and sample stations selection.

EPA has established a path forward for mussels toxicity through a methods development process, expected to involve UCR samples.

Bossburg beach site has unexpectedly high metals concentrations, as reported by Teck and EPA. Local contamination overprinted on system-wide Teck sediment contamination is present at this location. The historic town site has a colorful history.

Community Relations

Provided further comment on EPA draft beaches fact sheet planning. Continued assisting DOH in fish advisory planning.

Ecology continues routine ongoing association with the Lake Roosevelt Forum (LRF) – activity on this front was low during the period. Staff also maintains coordination with local government and outreach to interested citizens as needed. Communication with the Citizens for a Clean Columbia (CCC) continued during the period.

Upper Columbia River Watershed Mine and Mill Activities

Further assessment of the Young American mill is ongoing. Draft assessment report issued and recommends removal action. Ecology is strongly endorsing a significant action. Kathy Parker is the OSC. The Grandview Mine and Mill action approached completion.

1b. Problems and Corrective Actions

Ecology management and EPA management established steps toward improvements and recommitment to the MOA in order to achieve appropriate review times, transparency, and consensus building. The Problem Formulation dispute and mussel toxicity application in the RI effectively became a part of this broad process.

2.a. Is the project on schedule?

The schedule is managed by EPA. The Problem Formulation deficiencies have delayed the process. Difficulties in advancing detailed, timely, and productive discussions on the draft sediment QAPP also are jeopardizing the schedule.

b. What percentage of the project is complete?

Estimated progress on the RI/FS is roughly at 25.

3.a. Are the project expenditures to date as budgeted?

Expenditure predictions thus far appear to be generally as anticipated.

b. Discuss Discrepancies

N/A.

4a. How much time is needed to complete the project?

This is an EPA lead project. RI/FS Work Plan schedule updates currently projects project completion in 2018, or later.

b. What amount of funding is needed to complete the project?

Ecology anticipates that all annual funds in this new 4 year cooperative agreement or in excess could be fully utilized if the RI begins to progress as planned.

5. Other – N/A

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July 2011 – September 2011

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1a. Accomplishments

Project Management and Implementation

The CCT entered into a formal dispute concerning the Problem Formulation amendment. The CCT, DOI, and Ecology all object to the degree of revision the EPA team is prepared to implement and require of Teck.

An upper management supervisory-level management meeting took place in Seattle at EPA to resolve several outstanding project implementation problems and difficulties in the successful future implementation of the Participating Parties MOA.

Routine communications were maintained with the EPA project team and RPM. Weekly project manager meetings continue. Coordination with other state agencies continues, including Department of Health and Department of Fish and Wildlife and Department of Health.

Technical and Regulatory Remedial Action Participation

Continued re-evaluation of the 2005 Toxicity data. CH2M Hill discussing preliminary findings.

Participated in status updates and discussions on DOH fish tissue risk evaluation and beach sediment discussions.

Continued detailed discussions on the Problem Formulation amendment.

Community Relations

Provided comments on EPA draft beaches fact sheet.

Ecology continues routine ongoing association with the Lake Roosevelt Forum (LRF) – activity on this front was low during the period. Staff also maintains coordination with local government and outreach to interested citizens as needed. Communication with the Citizens for a Clean Columbia (CCC) continued during the period.

Upper Columbia River Watershed Mine and Mill Activities

Further assessment of the Young American mill, off highway 25 progressed. Kathy Parker is the OSC. The Grandview Mine and Mill action approached completion.

1b. Problems and Corrective Actions

Ecology management and EPA management established steps toward improvements and recommitment to the MOA in order to achieve appropriate review times, transparency, and consensus building. The Problem Formulation dispute and mussel toxicity application in the RI effectively became a part of this broad process.

2.a. Is the project on schedule?

The schedule is managed by EPA. The Problem Formulation deficiencies are delaying the process.

b. What percentage of the project is complete?

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3.a. Are the project expenditures to date as budgeted?

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1a. Accomplishments

Project Management and Implementation

During the period an upper management supervisory-level management meeting process was initiated to begin addressing outstanding project implementation problems and difficulties in the successful implementation of the Participating Parties MOA.

Regular communications were maintained with the EPA project team and RPM. Weekly project manager meetings continue. Coordination with other state agencies continues, including Department of Health and Department of Fish and Wildlife and Department of Health.

Technical and Regulatory Remedial Action Participation

Taking advantage of a ~60 foot drawdown of the reservoir, Ecology staff conducted field reconnaissance surveys of the upper river to locate fine-grained deposits and other appropriate sediment sampling stations to be used in the sampling process for sediment toxicity.

Ecology began conducting a review and initial re-evaluation of the Phase 1 2005 sediment toxicity results.

Discussions began on draft sediment QAPP planning and comments.

Community Relations

Ecology continues routine ongoing association with the Lake Roosevelt Forum (LRF) – activity on this front was low during the period. Staff also maintains coordination with local government and outreach to interested citizens as needed. Communication with the Citizens for a Clean Columbia (CCC) continued during the period.

Upper Columbia River Watershed Mine and Mill Activities

A visit to the Young American mill, off highway 25 resulted in Ecology making contact with removal program to arrange for a joint visit. Concern exists over risks associated with mill and tailings. Ecology coordination on the Grandview Mine action continues.

1b. Problems and Corrective Actions

Ecology management and EPA management are initiating steps toward discussing improvements and recommitment to the MOA in order to achieve appropriate review times, transparency, and consensus building.

2.a. Is the project on schedule?

The schedule is managed by EPA. The deficiencies associated with the Problem Formulation may delay the process.

b. What percentage of the project is complete?

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3.a. Are the project expenditures to date as budgeted?

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5. Other

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Progress Report

January 2011 – March 2011

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1a. Accomplishments

Project Management and Implementation

Regular communications were maintained with the EPA project team and RPM. Weekly project manager meetings continue. Coordination with other state agencies continues, including Department of Health and Department of Fish and Wildlife and Department of Health. Ecology objections remain concerning EPA unilateral advancement of Sturgeon studies without Participating Party technical support or meaningful contribution.

Technical and Regulatory Remedial Action Participation

Ecology sponsored a multi-party meeting on the status of existing UCR area fish data to initiate related discussions on background and health advisory planning protocols associated with the UCR fish tissue results.

A Teck draft of the sediment QAPP was received during the period.

Preparations were made for bending beach sampling planning discussions.

A revised version of the enhanced Problem Formulation was received and review initiated.

Community Relations

Ecology continues routine ongoing association with the Lake Roosevelt Forum (LRF) – activity on this front was low during the period. Staff also maintains coordination with local government and outreach to interested citizens as needed. Communication with the Citizens for a Clean Columbia (CCC) continued during the period.

1b. Problems and Corrective Actions

Ecology continues to seek improvements and recommitment to the MOA in order to achieve appropriate review times, transparency, and consensus building.

2.a. Is the project on schedule?

The schedule is managed by EPA. The deficiencies associated with the Problem Formulation is expected to delay the process.

b. What percentage of the project is complete?

Estimated progress on the RI/FS is roughly at 25.

3.a. Are the project expenditures to date as budgeted?

A new funding cycle and replacement Cooperative Agreement began on March 1, 2011 for the Feb. 2009 to Feb. 2010 cycle continues. Expenditure predictions thus far for 2011 were slightly below budget planning due to the continued lower than anticipated level of effort. Previous agreement funds have been rolled over to support the new agreement budget.

(Note: for budgeting purposes the new cooperative agreement covers a 4-year period ending in June 20, 2015. Additional funding through Teck and adjustments to the cooperative agreement is being pursued by EPA for beyond 2011, as the RI/FS will proceed for several years beyond.)

b. Discuss Discrepancies

N/A.

4a. How much time is needed to complete the project?

This is an EPA lead project. RI/FS Work Plan schedule updates currently project project completion in 2018, or later.

b. What amount of funding is needed to complete the project?

Ecology anticipates that all annual funds in this new 4 year cooperative agreement could be fully applied if the RI begins to progress as previously expected.

5. Other

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